



Today
 Rev. Dr. Glenda Hollingshead; November 2, 2025
 All Saints' Day Worship Service
 Psalm 119:137-144; Luke 19:1-10

Time flies when you're having fun, or so they say. It seems like only yesterday, Kinney and I were running along the sandy shore of Myrtle Beach enjoying our first vacation together. Then, the pages in our little story book began to turn and we were running after four children, barely able to keep up.

When I think back on the life and times of our family, like vivid snapshots, moments frozen in time appear in my mind's eye. Like the day Samuel, our first delight, was on the front walk riding his tricycle when I heard him calling out to someone. I walked outside to see him standing there with a serious expression on his face, chewing on a little stick and repeating to the gentleman mowing the church lawn, "Old man! Old man! Would you like a drink of water?" The "old man" was not

really that old, but he gladly accepted Samuel's kind offer—an offer that cemented a long friendship.

I can't think of little Sarah without recalling her boundless joy for life. Often, in the mornings, we would awaken to a familiar sound: clu—clunk, clu—clunk, clu—clunk... It was Sarah jumping up and down in her crib, bursting with excitement, eager to greet the day.

Seth was a quiet, easy-going child. Maybe that's why this snapshot remains with me. One day a bee stung him between his eyes, which sent us racing to the doctor. After a prednisone shot and prescription for a steroid dose pack, we returned home. Later, Seth, Sarah and I were in the living room. Sarah was innocently sitting on the floor, coloring and watching television. I was reading. And out of nowhere, Seth jumped off the couch, raced across the room, and slapped Sarah across the top of her head. Needless to say, the rascal had to be put on a short leash until the drugs wore off.

One of the pictures of Shane that I carry around in my heart is of him giving the best hugs in the whole wide world. I can still feel his little arms and legs wrapped around me in a grip that said, "I'm never going to let you go."

It seems like only yesterday. The days come and the days go, slipping through our fingers like a mist. How easily we take them for granted—instead of embracing each one as the gift that it is. Foolishly, we assume there will always be another day. Poet Jane Kenyon offers words of wisdom in a poem about a certain day even while she is well aware one day such days will no longer exist.

I got out of bed
on two strong legs.
It might have been
otherwise. I ate
cereal, sweet
milk, ripe, flawless
peach. It might
have been otherwise.

I took the dog uphill
to the birch wood.
All morning I did
the work I love.
At noon I lay down
with my mate. It might
have been otherwise.

We ate dinner together
at a table with silver
candlesticks. It might
have been otherwise.

I slept in a bed
in a room with paintings
on the walls, and
planned another day
just like this day.
But one day, I know,
it will be otherwise.¹

“Teach us to number our days,” Scripture tells us. No doubt, it would be unhealthy to contemplate the day of our death all the time. However, since today we have gathered to worship God and celebrate All Saints’ Day—it is the perfect time to consider, when we leave this earthly dwelling, how will we be remembered? Will we be likened to those people who witnessed Jesus’ love and compassion toward the tax collector and grumbled? Or will we be remembered as someone who was so eager to dwell in the light of Jesus, we’d do anything, even climb a tree, just to get close to him? Will our lives be marked by hurry and distraction—or by the quiet grace of presence, the memory of steaming cups of coffee and shared stories, the love that lingers long after words have faded? How will we be remembered?

When I call to mind the loved ones who have gone before, I cannot help but think of my cousin Kevin. He and Kinney shared a love for antiquing—wandering flea markets filled with stories from another time. Even now, I can still hear Kevin’s laughter, bright and full, echoing through the years. A gifted RN, he died in his sleep at the age of 39 because of a heart condition he didn’t even know he had. Kinney’s best friend Doyle lived life with gusto but his plans for a long retirement never came to fruition—a diagnosis of lymphoma cut short too many of his dreams. Today we pause and we remember.

Like a snapshot frozen in time, Zacchaeus is remembered as the wee little man who climbed up in the sycamore tree poised to catch a glimpse of Jesus. Probably, Zacchaeus awakes expecting this day to be like all the others. But one word from Jesus and Zacchaeus is forever changed. “Zacchaeus hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house *today*.” This day, Jesus said, we’ll sit at your table and dine together. This day!

In response, Zacchaeus scrambles down the tree—quicker than he climbed it—eager to welcome Jesus into his home. His heart is set not only on hospitality but on transformation. He pledges to

give half of his wealth to the poor and to repay fourfold anyone he has wronged. Then Jesus speaks those oh-so-important words: “Today, salvation has come to this house... for the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.” And that is how we should remember, Zacchaeus—not for his stature—but for his change of heart and his readiness to begin again.

At the end of the day—at the end of your life—how will you be remembered? Today, in the sanctuary, we have a Christ Candle and then 14 other candles representing friends and family who, over the past year, crossed the threshold into their eternal dwelling place. To the great communion of saints, these different lives have been added—ordinary lives—beautiful lives. Today, we pause, and we remember others. Someday—hopefully many years from now—others will pause and remember you and me. What will they remember?

This week I have pondered how I want to be remembered. Of course, I want to be remembered as Kinney’s wife, the mother of four incredible children, and a grandmother to five amazing kids! But I also hope when my life is over and someone lights a candle for me—I hope they remember I was an heir of God’s grace, a seeker of God’s face, a believer in the power of Jesus to transform all of life, and a witness of the Spirit’s power to make a way where there seems to be no way.

Today we pause and we remember. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

¹ Jane Kenyon, “Otherwise,” in *Receiving the Day: Christian Practices for Opening the Gift of Time*, Dorothy C. Bass (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2000), 41-42.

Cover Art by Ira Thomas, used by permission